of consumption norms. However, the Government is monitoring the availability *vis-a-vis* demand of urea and will take suitable steps to ensure that there is no significant gap between the demand and supply of urea.

If availability of urea happens to be more than the demand, then the Government can permit the export of urea.

Phosphatic fertilizer plant at Amjhore

2097. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Phosphatic fertilizer Plant at Amjhore in Bihar is not functioning satisfactorily and is incurring losses;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to close down the plant or privatize it;

(d) if so, whether Government propose to conduct an inquiry into the allegations of irregularities in that plant; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Amjhore unit of M/s Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Limited (PPCL) has consistently been incurring loss since 1992-93 consequent to withdrawal of the Retention Price Scheme for Phosphatic fertilizers, withdrawal of the import substitution incentives, intrinsic cost disadvantage of pyrites based sulphuric acid production and increase in operating costs of deep underground mining.

(c) to (e) The revival/rehabilitation proposal of PPCL including its Amjhore Unit have been referred to the Competent Authority and further action is dependent on its decision.

Toxic Chemicals from incinerators

2098. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been brought to the notice of Government that studies abroad indicate that incinerators emit super toxic chemicals, causing health hazards;

(b) whether any such study has been conducted in India;

(c) if so, what are the findings thereof; and

(d) what steps have been taken by Government to protect the enviornment?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Incinerators, if not designed and operated in a scientific manner, may emit highly toxic chemicals such as dioxins and furans.

(b) and (c) No comprehensive study has been carried out to inventorise emission of dioxins and furans.

(d) The Biomedical Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998 notified by the Government of India, contain provisions, *inter alia*, for regulating the use of incinerators in the country for disposal of biomedical wastes. Under these Rules, incineration of chlorinated plastics has been prohibited. Only double chambered incinerators under controlled temperature conditions and with necessary pollution control devices are allowed under the Rules. The operating and emission standards for incinerators have also been prescribed as a part of these Rules.

Ban on plastic carry bags

2099. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state·

(a) whether Government have notified the ban on use of plastic carry bags.

(b) if so, when was it notified;

(c) the names of States which have banned the use of plastic carry bags; and

(d) whether Karnataka has also banned the use of plastic carry bags?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests have brought out Recycled Plastics manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999. These rules have prohibited the use of carry bags and containers made of recycled plastics for storing, carrying, dispensing or packaging of foodstuff. Besides these rules also have specified a minimum thickness of plastics carry bags made of virgin